



Big I Virginia E-News

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July 2026

IIAV NEWS

Welcoming IIAV President & CEO Carter Lyons



Returning to IIAV feels a bit like coming home. This community, and each of you who comprise it, are so special to me. Reconnecting with you over the past few weeks has brought me so much joy, and it is truly an honor to serve you again.

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NEW MEMBERS – JULY

ASSOCIATES:

- Katz & Co | Glen Allen, VA

AGENCY:

- Cassedy Insurance Agency, Inc. | Herndon, VA
- Angel Bu Agency Inc dba Inter Group Insurance | Springfield, VA
- Fitzwilliams Financial | Chesapeake, VA

2026 IIAV Convention & Tradeshow Recap



William Desko of Penn National Insurance for Company Person of the Year



Mike Funkhouser of Haun-Magruder, Inc., for receiving the Gold Eagle Award.

Thank you
to everyone
who joined

us for another outstanding IIAV Convention & Tradeshow! From our Welcome Reception Casino Night to two days of engaging education, networking, and a bustling tradeshow, this year's event was filled with valuable insights and meaningful connections.

Attendees heard from an exceptional lineup of industry leaders covering customer loyalty, the future of the independent agency system, fraud prevention, agency best practices, and the growing role of artificial intelligence in insurance.

Congratulations are in order for this year's winners:

Travelers for earning the 2026 Best Booth Award

William Desko of Penn National Insurance for Company Person of the Year

Mike Funkhouser of Haun-Magruder, Inc., for receiving the Gold Eagle Award.

A sincere thank you to our speakers, exhibitors, sponsors, volunteers, and attendees for making this year's convention such a success.

Missed a session or want to relive the experience? Visit our **2026 Convention Post-Event Page** to view photos, award recipients, presentation materials, and other convention highlights.

[Learn More...](#)

Consistency Is Critical

In human resources, we promote consistency in how employees are treated. We do this because the manager who applies the same expectations, standards, and consequences to everyone — on good days and bad — is more likely to lead a strong, durable team instead of perpetually putting out fires. A team that knows where it stands is a team that performs well.

Consistency sounds simple, but it is not easy. It means holding your top performer to the same standards as your worst performer, documenting the conversation you would rather have informally, and enforcing a rule even when the person breaking it is someone you like. But the payoff is substantial: it is how you earn trust, bring your values to life, protect the organization legally, and win real buy-in.

[Read More...](#)

Q&A with The Workplace Advisors – July 2026

Q: We have an employee who wears way too much fragrance. We have received numerous complaints from other employees, especially those that work in the same area, that the aroma is overwhelming. What can we do?

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Your Business is Our Business ®



Berkshire Hathaway GUARD Insurance Companies is backed by the financial strength of our ultimate parent, Berkshire Hathaway, Inc. In Virginia, we offer a full product suite for your commercial clients that includes a Businessowner's Policy, Commercial Auto, Commercial Umbrella, and Workers' Compensation. "Pay-as-you-go" billing options are also featured.

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Locking Down Talent

Reagan Consulting

Authored by: Brian McNeely

How today's most successful agents and brokers are winning the war for their best people — before the competition ever gets a chance to make an offer.

Ask any agency principal what is currently keeping them up at night, and the conversation inevitably includes talent acquisition and talent retention. Losing a key producer or account executive to a competitor is now easier, faster, and more common than at almost any point in our industry's history.

The war for talent has always existed. What's changed is its intensity. Two forces are driving that shift. First, competing brokers have rolled out increasingly lucrative compensation packages designed specifically to lure producers. Second, many of those same brokers are willing — and often eager — to encourage recruits to simply disregard the restrictive covenants they signed with their current employer.

Because of this, we're now helping clients evaluate their vulnerabilities and build retention strategies for key employees earlier in their careers. The encouraging news: there are more credible, well-tested options available today than ever before to solve this problem. What follows is a look at the most widely used strategies — recognizing that variations and hybrid approaches exist for nearly every situation.

[Read More...](#)

Building Stronger Leaders Through Mentorship and Training

IIABA

By: Susan Bonner

The Big "I" Diversity Council announces two new programs designed to help insurance professionals.

The [Mentorship Program](#) provides a space where members can ask questions, share experiences, gain confidence, and build relationships that strengthen both individual careers and our industry as a whole.

The goal of the program is to connect emerging and experienced professionals in a collaborative environment that encourages learning, leadership, and long-term success within the industry.

Learn about the [program today](#).

The [Inclusive Leadership Training](#) is a four-module education program that helps high-performing team leaders create a healthy organizational culture.

The sessions are based on the Paradigm proprietary Inclusive Leadership Framework: Objectivity, Belonging, Voice and Growth. [Registration](#) is free for Big “I” members and company partners.

To learn about becoming a Big “I” Diversity partner, contact [Jamie Behymer](#).

Trusted Choice Launches Agency Logo Hub

A consistent and professionally designed logo is a key component of establishing a strong local brand identity. Unfortunately, updating your logo – or even getting the correct file types for use across platforms – can be costly and time consuming, and often is a challenge for smaller agencies without a graphic designer on staff.

To help with the process, Trusted Choice has launched its new [Agency Logo Hub](#). Experts will give you a free review of your existing logo, and also provide you enhanced logo files that will provide better clarity and versatility across all platforms.

Looking for help with a rebrand or creating a new logo? You can work one-on-one with designers on these projects for a fee.

Check out the details of both the free and paid options [here](#) and make sure your logo is representing your agency well.



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VEC Listening Sessions on

Virginia's Paid Family & Medical Leave Program

The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) is holding a series of virtual listening sessions in the coming weeks as it begins the work of promulgating regulations for Virginia's mandatory paid family and medical leave insurance program as required by Chapters 981 and 1093 of the 2026 Acts of Assembly. These meetings are intended to supplement the formal public comment period on VEC's Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA), which closes today.

The Virginia Chamber of Commerce submitted formal comments to the NOIRA on behalf of Virginia's business community, which can be found [here](#). IIAV encourages you to review their comments as background for the listening sessions.

VEC has organized these sessions by anticipated audience, and two may be of relevance to you as a Virginia business leader:

- Thursday, July 30, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. – Employers
- Thursday, August 13, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. – Small Business Owners

The full schedule of virtual listening sessions can be found [here](#) and include sessions intended for employees, the self-employed, healthcare providers, and other stakeholder groups. Interested parties are welcome to participate in any of the sessions, but [registration](#) is required. To receive updates directly from the VEC as the regulatory process proceeds, you may subscribe to the PFML mailing list [here](#).

IIAV strongly encourages its members to participate in one or more sessions, as every employer in the Commonwealth has a stake in the implementation of this new program.

Local Presence. Regional Strength.



Penn National Insurance is small enough to provide personal, caring interactions, but large enough to serve you and your policyholders with the same sophistication and product offering of the largest carriers. We back our promise to help people feel secure and make life better when bad things happen with our strong financial position, and we remain committed to distributing our products and services through independent agencies.

[Learn More](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

UP COMING IIAV EDUCATION & EVENTS



[2026 Young Agents Charity Event](#)

Join the IIAV Young Agents on **Thursday, August 20**, for an evening of networking while supporting **Surfers Healing Virginia Beach**.

Co-hosted with the Young Risk Professionals of Richmond, this event will raise funds for **Surfers Healing**, a nonprofit that provides children with autism the opportunity to experience the joy and therapeutic benefits of surfing.

All proceeds will directly support Surfers Healing Virginia Beach, helping create unforgettable experiences for local children and their families.

Thursday, August 20

5:00 PM

Conex RVA

Register today and help us make a difference for families in our community! <https://members.iiav.com/ap/Events/Register/12FYoDKFgCVCB>

Learn more about Surfers Healing Virginia Beach: <https://www.surfershealingvb.org/>

Learn more about Young Risk Professionals of Richmond: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/yrp-young-risk-professionals-of-richmond-inc/posts/?feedView=all>

Become a Sponsor: <https://members.iiav.com/ap/Events/Register/KVF4xn1F9FBCW>

IIAV Connects 9/24/2026



A quarterly webinar series beginning in Fall 2026, designed to bring together insurance professionals across Virginia for practical, peer-driven conversations on the most relevant issues impacting agencies today.

This series will focus on real-world strategies, tools, and insights to help insurance professionals better manage their business, their teams, and their day-to-day responsibilities.

Free to IIAV Members!

[REGISTER NOW](#)



Flood Advance - FEMA

IIAV Hybrid Course | July 30 | 9:00 am - 12:00 pm | [Register Now](#)

Member Price: \$68.00 | Non-Member Price: \$98.00

Member Price: \$350.00 | Non-Member Price: \$350.00

Member Price: \$100 | Non-Member Price: \$150

E&O Risk Management Coverage Essentials: Avoiding E&O in the Personal Auto Policy and Personal Umbrella Policy (Webinar)

Member Price: \$84 | Non-Member Price: \$120

**Helping our 228
Virginia members
thrive since 1988.**

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